

Francis C. Steitz, Director
Division of Air Quality
Department of Environmental Protection
P.O. Box 420 Mail code 401-02
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Director Steitz:

Thank you for your November 21, 2016 initial notification letter regarding a potential exceptional event for ozone occurring from May 25th to 28th, 2016.

The Environmental Protection Agency is looking forward to reviewing the technical demonstration that the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection will submit to substantiate the request for air quality data to be labeled as due to an exceptional event. Our office will work with your staff and the EPA Region 1 office as you prepare the materials outlined in the EPA's September 16, 2016, "Guidance on the Preparation of Exceptional Events Demonstrations for Wildfire Events that May Influence Ozone Concentrations."

In separate discussions, your staff has asked the EPA to estimate the amount of evidence the NJDEP will need to prepare for ozone air quality data to be labeled as an exceptional event. The level of analysis needed, which ranges from Tier 1 to 3, depends on the strength of the evidence available for an exceptional event. In this case, a Tier 2 level of analysis may suffice. However, given the long distance from the probable cause(s) of this impact on air quality, a greater amount of information may be needed.

In order for the determination of the exceptional event to be recognized in the air quality data that will be used for designations of the 2015 ozone standard, NJDEP will need to submit a final demonstration by May 31, 2017. NJDEP must provide at least a 30-day public comment period on this demonstration and public comments must be addressed prior to the formal submission of the exceptional event request.

If you have any further questions, please contact Richard Ruvo, Chief of the Air Programs Branch at (212) 637-4014. The EPA Region 2 Air Programs staff remains available to work with your staff as they prepare NJDEP's demonstration.

Sincerely,

John Filippelli, Director
Clean Air and Sustainability Division

cc: Danny Wong, NJDEP